

New Jersey
Profile of State High School Exit Exam Policies

<i>State exit exam policy</i>	All students in New Jersey are required to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) in order to receive a diploma.
Type of test	Comprehensive standards-based
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the exam is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine prospective high school graduates' mastery of selected content and foundation skills in math and literacy. • Encourage districts and schools to identify and serve students at risk of academic failure • Provide data to state policymakers on student attainment of state education goals to inform educational policy decisions • Increase alignment of local curriculum and programs of instruction with state education standards • Promote equity of opportunity across all student groups • Meet a state mandate • Satisfy high school graduation requirements • Serve federal accountability requirements
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for financial reasons	None
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for <i>other</i> reasons	None
Year first administered	Students who were in 11 th grade in 2002 were the first to take the HSPA.

	The HSPA replaced the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT11), which was first administered in 1983 and became a state graduation requirement for all public high school students who entered the 9 th grade on or after September 1, 1991. The class of 2000 was the last required to pass the HSPT11.
Year diplomas first withheld	The class of 2003 was the first required to pass the HSPA to obtain a diploma.
Subjects tested on exam	Language arts literacy and mathematics
Subjects required for graduation	Language arts literacy and mathematics
Grade exam first administered	11 th grade
Grade(s) exam aligned to	9th through 11th
Number of retakes allowed <i>before</i> the end of grade 12	Two; students who are retained have additional opportunities.
Number of retakes allowed <i>after</i> grade 12	No limit on retest opportunities; students in adult high schools are also eligible to take the HSPA.
Is the exit exam used for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability purposes?	Students have three opportunities to pass the HSPA. The results are “banked” which means after the three HSPA administrations are complete for a cohort of students, the results in language arts literacy and math are calculated to determine adequate yearly progress under NCLB.
Is the same cut score used for graduation and NCLB accountability purposes?	Yes

Considerations given to changing the cut score needed to pass the exam for graduation purposes in the past year	New Jersey is considering changes in the cut score with the new high school assessment contract in 2012-13.
Alternate paths to graduation for students other than English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities	<p>Students who fail one or both sections of the HSPA may go through the Alternate High School Assessment (AHSA) process that offers them an alternate way to demonstrate their mastery of the required skills.</p> <p>The alternate path is designed to allow students to be assessed in the state standards through a series of extended performance tasks (i.e., all constructed response) aligned to the state content standards.</p> <p>Students who fail one or both sections of the HSPA are eligible to participate in the AHSA process, and most begin this alternate process automatically after they have not passed the HSPA on their second try during their 12th grade year.. In addition, students who have met all other graduation requirements except passing the HSPA or AHSA can file an appeal which is a portfolio designed to demonstrate through other indicators that they have successfully met the graduation requirement. Finally, students can either return to school at testing time the following year and retake the HSPA or pass the GED test. There is also the Thirty College Credit program, by which a student can be awarded a state-issued high school diploma for documented college credits earned. New Jersey also has adult high school programs in which a student can earn a local district high school diploma.</p>
Determination of eligibility to pursue these alternate paths to graduation	Not Passing the HSPA
Number and percentage of students who used alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	No response

Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners	<p>None. English language learners may demonstrate proficiency in the required content areas by completing the AHSA process, which is available in Spanish and in three additional languages other than English. To be eligible for an AHSA in their native language, a student must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scored below the state-established cutoff on one of the state-approved English language tests • Participated in a bilingual, English as a second language, or English language services program for two consecutive years or fewer before the HSPA testing, or • Attended school in the U.S. for three consecutive years or fewer before the date of the HSPA. <p>English language learners who take the AHSA must also pass the English fluency test to receive a high school diploma.</p> <p>There are accommodations for English language learners taking the exit exam, including additional time, the reading aloud of directions, and the use of translation dictionaries.</p>
Number and percentage of ELL students using alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	Not applicable
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities	<p>Some students with disabilities are exempt from passing—but not from taking—the HSPA, based on their individualized education program (IEP). Students who are designated as “IEP-exempt from passing” must take the exempt portions of the test at least once, but their scores will not affect their graduation status. Students with severe cognitive disabilities take the alternate proficiency assessment (APA) instead of the HSPA and can earn a regular diploma if they fulfill all other requirements for graduation.</p> <p>There are considerable accommodations for students with disabilities, including extra time, the reading aloud of directions and test items, use of assistive technology, the use of a scribe, and others. These are detailed in the state DOE manuals and on the DOE Web site.</p>

Number and percentage of students with disabilities using alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	No Response
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for undergraduate admission purposes?	No
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for placement purposes?	No
Are students who meet a certain standard on the state exit exam granted exemptions on college placement exams?	No
Can students receive any form of postsecondary education course credit for their performance on the exit exam?	No
Access to initial and cumulative pass rates on high school exit exams	http://www.nj.gov/education/schools/achievement/
State participation in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	New Jersey has adopted the CCSS in both English language arts and math.
CCSS testing consortia membership	New Jersey is a Governing State in PARCC.

Impact of adoption of the CCSS on high school exit exam policies	Not yet determined
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in English language arts with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Yes, in 2012-13
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in math with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Yes, in 2012-13
Plans to maintain current exit exams in subjects other than English language arts and math once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented	Not yet determined
Will changes in state exit exams mentioned above make the exams more rigorous, less rigorous, or about the same?	More rigorous
Preparation for students and teachers to transition to new exam	Not yet determined